Art, Politics & the Public Square: From decoration to declaration!

Danielle Child

Abstract

The term 'public art' has long conjured images of modernist sculpture as baubles for the British new towns or monuments to historical figures. Efforts to revisit the term and reassess its associations have made visible a new heterogeneous public art that engages with space, place and identity in new and diverse ways. Whilst these revisions subvert the traditional idea of public art as creating fixed, permanent structures, what remains in common with the public art of the past is the *urban* as a suitable site. Adopting Henri Lefebvre's fluid understanding of the city as an *oeuvre*, this article looks to the relationship between art, the urban and its material: the social. This article contributes a critical reading of the implied politics of three contemporary public art practices through returning to consider the political figure of the virtuoso (whose historical site is the public square) in Hannah Arendt's writings and revived in Paolo Virno's critique of neoliberalism. Arendt's understanding of the term is explored in relation to three public art projects: *Tahrir Cinema* (2011-), Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla's *Chalk* (1998-2006) and Suzanne Lacy's *Between the Door and the Street* (2013) to propose that these works constitute contemporary political practices within the public realm.

> *The city is a mediation among mediations. Containing the near order, it supports it; it maintains the relations of production and property; it is the place of their reproduction. Contained in the far order, it supports it; it incarnates it; it projects it over a terrain (the site) and on a plan, that of immediate life; it inscribes it, prescribes it, writes it. A text in a context so vast and ungraspable as such except by reflection.*
>
> *And thus the city is an oeuvre, closer to a work of art than to a simple material product.* (Lefebvre 1968/2004: 101)

Henri Lefebvre's articulation of the city in the late 1960s is as applicable to the contemporary city as it was at the time of writing. His conception of the city (in his case, Paris) provides a foundation for the following discussion which considers the implicit politics of three examples of contemporary public art practice in relation to their situation within urban space. Lefebvre's is an understanding of the city not as an arrangement of fixed structures, or a mass of materials but as an *oeuvre* in which both the material base - the buildings and the conditions of production - and the superstructure - its ideologies (or, the aspects that contain its ideologies – art, law, culture etc.) - engage in a form of dialectical cohabitation. As such, events – including artistic practices - that take place within the city are often, consciously or not, part of a political project. Furthermore, Lefebvre understood the city as a social construct, reliant upon its inhabitants. Adopting Lefebvre's fluid understanding of the city as an oeuvre, the relationship between art, the urban and its material - the social – is examined, with a particular focus on three social practices in public space: Mosireen's *Tahrir Cinema* (2011-), Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla's *Chalk* (1998-2006) and Suzanne Lacy's *Between the Door and the Street* (2013).

Recent publications on social art practice, including *Out of Time, Out of Place: Public Art (Now*) (Doherty, 2015), *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011* (Thompson 2011) and Suzanne Lacy's earlier *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (1995), have been invaluable in making visible the diverse nature of contemporary public practices and for reframing the term 'public art'. However, there remains much critical work to be done in understanding the implied politics of contemporary social art practices taking place outside of the art institution. This article offers a contribution to this discussion; through revisiting the relationship between the performing artist, public space and politics in Hannah Arendt's writings, the following presents a reading of three contemporary public art projects as implicitly political practices.

Public Art and Politics

Historically, the sites of public art have been chosen for ideological purposes, often tied to political projects. The most obvious examples are historical monuments that inscribe a political dominance (usually that of the ruling state) and an ideology, within the locations. For example, the statues of Queen Victoria in colonial India functioned as a reminder to the colonised Indian people of their regent, as if to close the distance between ruler and ruled. The dominance of Lenin's image, and subsequently Stalin, in Communist Russia signaled a political ideology to the people. In his 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', Walter Benjamin refers to cultural heritage as the spoils of history, belonging to and inscribed by its victors. He states: 'There has never been a document of culture, which is not simultaneously one of barbarism.' (Benjamin 1940/1968: 256) These monuments are thus inscribed not only with victory but also with violence and defeat. When another victor emerges, the cultural heritage is publicly destroyed to assert alternative political declarations. A contemporary example is the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue in Baghdad's Al-Fardous (Paradise) Square in 2003. [1] The iconoclastic destruction of public monuments serves as testament to the power of an image to endorse a political belief.

Even when the political project is not as explicit – i.e. modernist sculpture in Britain's post-war New Towns – there is an implied ideological content. In the case of the New Towns, built to deal with overcrowding in the congested, industrialised cities, modern art signaled a contemporary, progressive, new way of living. Furthermore, embracing the modernist vision, this new mode of living implied a certain kind of public (the Reith Committee famously referred to the new towns plan as an 'essay in civilization'). And this notion that art can 'improve' an area (and its inhabitants) permeates today, with public art often added into regeneration proposals. Gentrification has long been tied to areas in which artistic communities lived and

worked, that is until increased rent forces the artists out of the areas in which their presence in the area initially led to its valorisation.[2]

The American equivalent was (to adapt Suzanne Lacy's 'the cannon in the park') the canon in the plaza which was initially conceived as a 'means of reclaiming and humanizing the urban environment.' (Lacy 1995: 21) The latter term is to acknowledge the popularity of large-scale monuments by artists such as Claes Oldenburg, Clement Meadmore and Richard Serra in central US urban spaces, as a result of the 'art in public places' and 'percent for art' schemes. However, more recently – and perhaps, since the controversy surrounding the removal of Serra's *Tilted Arc* from New York's Federal Plaza in 1989 - the conflation of regeneration and public art is increasingly seen as implemented from 'above' and part of the neoliberal project.

The Rise of Public Participation

Thus far, the idea of public art as objects being imposed on publics, often both materially and ideologically, has been addressed. This is not to condemn all public art but to show its limited function within the city understood as an *oeuvre*. People are central to Lefebvre's understanding of the city; he sees the production of the city and social relations within it as the production and reproduction of human beings by human beings, rather than the production of objects. In the above examples - historical monuments, baubles for new towns and the canon in the plaza - there is a clear demarcation between objects and people within the final works.

An alternative narrative of public art does, however, exist.[3] Whilst historical monuments and the canon in the plaza continued to proliferate in urban spaces internationally, there emerged an artistic practice that responded to its site in terms of both the social and physical space. Artists such as Lacy, Adrian Piper, Vito Acconci and Mierle Laderman Ukeles were beginning to engage in performative, non-object

producing actions in public. Whilst this type of art had been practiced since the 1960s (and arguably earlier) it was largely ignored by the mainstream artworld. However, something shifted in the 1990s when the art world began to pay attention to, what is loosely termed here, social practices in art. Included in the terminologies ascribed to these practices are: relational aesthetics or relational art, participatory art, dialogical art, social practice and socially-engaged art, amongst others. Accompanying these new practices there emerged a new model of public art agency, for example, Creative Time, New York; Public Art Agency, Sweden, and Situations in the UK.[4] Through the work of these agencies, and alongside contemporary manifestations of what would more comfortably be called 'monuments'[5], there can be found a range of visible participatory and socially-engaged public art practices. The kind of works that were deemed unpopular in the mid to late twentieth century – for not producing objects to be placed in the public realm – have now become commissionable. It will be argued in the following that it is the element which makes them difficult works (i.e. not producing an object) that assists in understanding them as political practices within the public realm.

As an art historian interested in capitalism's effect on artistic production the question of whether new artistic practices are resistant to or a product of current ideologies stemming from neoliberalism constantly arises. The new public art practices are no exception. Whilst I have argued elsewhere that the practices termed 'relational aesthetics' (Bourriaud 2002) – a term ascribed to a pseudo-social practice that exists within the physical and ideological space of the art gallery – can be read as products of a neoliberal ideology (Child 2011 and forthcoming), it can also be argued that some socially-engaged practices situated in public space have a political potential. The heterogeneous nature of these practices invites us to consider the differences rather than try to fit them into one homogeneous movement, as art history has previously tended to do. The three practices to be discussed are distinct in their form, methods and geographical locations but also have commonalities that

help us to understand their practices as political. In order to elaborate, let us first turn to Paolo Virno's conception of the virtuoso.

The Virtuoso: Virno and Arendt

In the second chapter of his book, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, Paolo Virno considers the three fundamental spheres of the classical division of human experience: labour, political action and intellect. He argues that under post-Fordism or neoliberalism (the term used hereafter), the three distinct spheres have become blurred, with the figure of the virtuoso taking centre stage within neoliberal labour. The virtuoso here can be understood as someone with characteristics akin to the performing artist and who is creative, flexible and adaptable in their work. The idea that contemporary capitalism has adopted a worker-model from the arts is not a unique argument. Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello (1999) propose that a new type of worker and a new ideology arose from the absorption of the artistic critique of capitalism post-1968. This ideology became manifest in management discourse around the 1990s.[6]

To return to Virno, he argues that Marx's second type of intellectual labour – now termed immaterial labour - has now become the dominant mode of labour. Under this model, labour turns into a virtuosic performance. The labour that belonged to the performing artist now belongs to capitalist working models. Virno takes his conception of the virtuoso from Hannah Arendt who, after Aristotle, compares the virtuoso to the politician. As such, Virno concludes that: 'Work has absorbed the distinctive traits of political action.' (Virno 1996: 189) Thus, the performative characteristics of political action have become part of the dominant mode of production: neoliberal capitalism. In this model, communicative activity becomes the end, which is why the structure of wage labour has overlapped with that of political

action. (Virno 1996: 56) That is, in the Western world, the dominant work models become less about object production and more about performing services and providing information.

Whilst Virno presents a damning critique of new working models that adopt the traits of the performing artist in the contemporary period, it is useful to return to the origins of his discussion of the virtuoso, which is informed by Hannah Arendt's writings. In a chapter titled 'What is Freedom?' from *Between Past and the Future* (1961/2006), Arendt examines the relationship between politics, freedom and performance in which she distinguishes between the artist as maker and the performing artist. Adopting Machievelli's *virtù*, Arendt suggests that virtuosity is the quality that aligns performance with politics. She states that it is: '… An excellence we attribute to the performing arts (as distinguished performance itself and not in an end product which outlasts the activity that brought it into existence and becomes independent of it.' (Arendt 1961/2006:151) For Arendt the process or action is more important than producing an object. She further elaborates that performing arts, like politics, both need an audience, a publicly organized space and depend on others for the performance itself.

Arendt roots her argument in the philosophy of the ancient Greeks. The Greeks drew their analogies - to distinguish political from other activities - from those arts in which the 'virtuosity of performance is decisive.' (Arendt 1961/2006: 152) Furthermore, in Arendt's proposition, the creative process in a work of art happens in private whilst the creative process in the performing arts not only takes place in public space but also relies on the public. The historical modes of public art making - the titular decoration in the public square - could be understood in terms of the former. The process of making the work – the creative act - takes place in private.[7]

It might be useful to think about Serra's *Tilted Arc*, for a moment here. Whilst initially conceived as a site-specific work with which the public would presumably physically and spatially interact, perhaps the 120 foot long by 12 foot high sculpture's fate would have been different had the creative act (the conception, for example) taken place in the public realm, with the public who would share Federal Plaza in which it was sited. The hidden nature of its creation (although not its installation) assists the conception that the work was an imposition from above (not helped by the fact that it was commissioned by General Services Administration), rather than a work that engaged or relied upon the public. In Arendt's formulation, the (privately made) object suddenly 'appears in the world' and thus, the element of freedom (the act of making) remains hidden (Arendt 1961/2006:152). Moreover, without the public protesting against the location of the sculpture, we could assume that *Tilted Arc* would still be standing in Federal Plaza today. In this case, the work did not rely on the public as, in fact, it precipitated its removal. In a reversal of Serra's intentions, we might begin to understand the public's protest against the sculpture and the removal of the work as a performative political act in itself.

Art and the Public Square

The public realm is important to Arendt's conception of the virtuoso and this is key to understanding the new public art practices as resistant to neoliberal ideology. Whilst contemporary art was having its 'social turn' (as Claire Bishop termed it), the world was preparing to witness a concentrated period of public uprisings, beginning with mass protests in Tunisia in January 2011. During 2011, as is well documented, there was a proliferation of protests and occupations across the globe, which took place in the streets and, pertinent to this article, a number of these uprisings chose the public square as its site. Included amongst these protest sites are: Tahrir Square, Cairo; Pearl Square, Bahrain; Green Square (subsequently the Square of the Martyrs), Libya, Syntagma Square, Athens and, later in 2013, Taksim Square, Istanbul.[8]

To return to Lefebvre's conception of the urban as the social: without the presence of people, the squares would just be physical spaces that reinforce the near order (means of production etc.). Through human occupation, the meanings and the historical conditions of the urban sites are changed. Of course, the revived phrase 'the right to the city' adopted, adapted and updated by David Harvey (and associated with the Occupy movement) comes from Lefebvre. In his 1967 essay 'The Right to the City' Lefebvre identified a number of problems with the contemporary city. One of the listed problems was that the city was looked at as an object without a subject; he called for the intellectual approaches and tools to be changed in order to understand the city as an oeuvre, calling for the sociologist and the architect to pave the way. (This idea of the city as an object without a subject also resonates with the historical situation of public sculpture). For Lefebvre, those who could really affect a social change, through action, however, were groups. Again, the social is key to understanding and engaging with the city. He further identified that the voids in the city are places of the possible. Perhaps we could understand the voids in the city as the public parks and squares, which often simply function as quotidian spaces we pass through.

Interestingly, in Creative Time's volume on socially-engaged art, *Living as Form* (Thompson: 2011), Tahrir Square is listed alongside the projects, elevating its status to socially-engaged art. Although this listing of the square's protests might act as a provocation within the volume, amidst the protests and within Tahrir Square there emerged a critical, creative public practice: Mosireen's *Tahrir Cinema* (2011-). The project began in 2011 when a group of people (including the artist Lara Baladi and media collective Mosireen) set up a screen in Tahrir Square during the sit in, onto which videos of the day's events were publicly screened at 10.30pm each evening. These screenings included footage captured on mobile phones and other devices, some compiled by the collective and others collated from online and social

media. Beyond the protests, the footage screened at *Tahrir Cinema* and collected during the protests, has built into a public archive.

Focusing on the initial temporary cinema, I propose that the organization of *Tahrir Cinema* constitutes a political practice in Arendt's understanding of the realm of politics. The agora – the Greek public square – is implicit in Arendt's return to Greek polis. The polis provided a space of appearances where men could act, with a kind of theatre where freedom could appear (Arendt 1961/2006:152) *Tahrir Cinema* originated in a publicly-organised space – a public square – in which a mass of people – the public – had politically organized and occupied. It is important to stress here the 'from below' element in organizing *Tahrir Cinema*. The public is central to the production of the 'cinema' as it provides amateur footage to be shown and also an audience. As Arendt's conception of the virtuosic is born out of her quest to understand freedom, we might also consider the freedom that the screenings allowed the people. She claims that 'Men are free…as long as they act.' (Arendt 1961/2006: 151) That is, the freedom from a constructed and state controlled media and a freedom for expression, valuing and providing a platform for personal eyewitness accounts. The screenings further acted as a site of information, of knowledge-production, including the immediate writing of history (before the victors):

> The project was an ingenious way to involve the actors of history in their own representation, as viewers actively requested videos and critiqued their content. The archive came alive, not as a record for posterity but as a dynamic tool in the (self) narration of the revolution. The material proved to be generative of debates and discussions that helped to crystalize ideas and maintain momentum. (Filming Revolution, n.d.)

Thus it depended on others, not only to produce the films and to act as witness to them. But these witnesses were not passive; as noted above, the viewers became

active participants in constructing the narratives during the screenings and in the ensuing critical discussions.

Tahrir Cinema is not the only creative act in a public square which relied on the audience to create the work. Between 1998-2006 Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla, placed twelve five foot long pieces of chalk in public squares in Lima, Paris and New York. Conceived as alternative monuments, the works titled *Chalk* had the appearance of minimal sculptures (or perhaps something akin to Oldenburg's large-scale public sculptures of everyday objects). These 'sculptures', however, were intended to be active; the artists invited the public to use the chalk to create ephemeral drawings or inscribe messages on the square. In order for this piece to work, it needed an audience and a public space. Without the public, the chalk sticks would have remained as static sculptures, as objects placed in a public square, eventually corroding. In Arendt's formula, the creative act would either never have taken place or, perhaps, it would have been conceived as the making of the giant chalk sticks. The Lima version was sited in a public square outside governmental buildings, including the president's house. The artists explain:

> Our idea was to place the chalks in the plaza where the city, state, and federal governmental buildings of Peru are located. Every day at noon, they allow protesters to make a lap around the plaza- exactly one lap and then they have to leave. That is their opportunity to publicly voice whatever demands they might have. When we put our work there, the protesters realized that the huge chalks provided another way to vocalize and make visible their demands. (Allora and Calzadilla: n.d.)

On one of the days during the work's installation, an independent group (presumably those allowed daily into the square for an hour) gathered to hold an impromptu protest, covering the square with political text and causing the police to arrive and

close down the performance within three hours of its eruption. Calzadilla recalls how the police 'arrested the sculpture' as the chalk was gathered and taken away, whilst the messages were washed from the square. (Allora and Calzadilla, 2007) In the same interview, the artists describe the coexistence of the political messages alongside other contributions by the public as a 'complex forum registered on this floor.' (Allora and Calzadilla, 2007) The idea of a forum returns us to the Roman forum and its Greek kin, the agora. Both are historically important public sites of commerce, theatre and political debate. Through allowing people to protest in the square for an hour day, the Peruvian government gave the democratic appearance of freedom of speech. Allora and Calzadilla's piece disrupted this appearance, exposing it as false. When freedom of speech and politics continue beyond the allocated time, the protesters are silenced.

Adapting Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's proposition for a radical democratic politics, in her well-known critique of *Relational Aesthetics*, Claire Bishop (2004) argues that democratic artistic practices are essentially antagonistic. For Bishop, the antagonistic element lies in the inclusion of non-art participants, often outside of the gallery. Although both the sanctioned protests and *Chalk* took place in the same site – the public square - and (with the impromptu protest) were both political in their nature, the antagonistic element was facilitated by *Chalk*. In this sense, the impromptu protest could be understood as a truly democratic act, allowing for political action to take place. Arendt states: '…wherever the man-made world does not become the scene for action and speech…freedom has no worldly reality…. Without a politically guaranteed public realm freedom lacks the worldly space to make its appearance.' (Arendt 1961/2006:147) Although the freedom encountered through this political act was short-lived, the invitation to participate had led to an impromptu political act.

Art and the Public Street

The final example does not take place in a public square but on a public street, or more precisely, on the stoops of brownstone houses on Park Place in the neighbourhood of Prospect Heights in Brooklyn, New York. This example also returns us to Suzanne Lacy but this time as a practitioner, with her 2013 work titled *Between the Door and the Street* (presented by Creative Time and the Elizabeth A. Sackler Centre for Feminist Art). The work took place over one evening on 19th October in 2013. The performance engaged around 400 women (and a few men) in conversations about contemporary issues facing women. The participants were activist women from 76 social justice groups invited to participate in the work.[9] Participants wearing all black, with the exception of yellow pashminas were organized on the steps of the houses whilst the audience – members of the public – were invited to walk along the street and listen into the conversations taking place. After the conversations had ended, the participants joined the public in the streets.

In her alignment of the performing artist with the politician, Arendt demarcates between artists who produce objects and those who perform. The process of making is obfuscated in the former whilst it is undertaken in public, in the latter. No object is produced. For Arendt activity is key, she states: 'The raison d'etre of politics is freedom, and its field of experience is action.' (Arendt 1961/2006: 145) Moreover, principles – amongst which Arendt counts virtuosity - only manifest in action, in the performing act itself. (Arendt 1961/2006: 151) This is an important point; it could be argued that this manifestation of principles through action in public is central to distinguishing the contemporary public art, including the aforementioned, from those historically concerned with producing objects that continue to exist after the act. Furthermore, within the act, speech also becomes important. Arendt writes:

> Freedom needed…the company of other men who were in the same state, and it needed a common public space to meet them – a politically

> organized world, in other words, into which each of the free men could insert himself by word and deed. (Arendt 1961/2006: 147)

Speech is central to Lacy's practice.[10] Previous projects have brought together American youths from working class and/or non-white backgrounds with police (*The Roof is on Fire*, 1994; *Code 33: Emergency*, 1999) and gendered and aged groups (*Whisper, the Waves, the Wind*, with Sharon Allen,1983-4; *The Crystal Quilt*, 1985-7) to engage in dialogue around certain topics. *Between the Door and the Street* brought together a carefully selected, but divergent group of women to converse. Bearing witness (as one commentator on the event put it) to this act of speech was important for Lacy as it allowed for a temporary freedom to discuss issues of gender and politics in public. With 400 participants, the work could have taken place without the invited audience, with conversations unfolding in the groupings on the steps. As such, the invitation to come and listen and move amongst the conversations, hearing different views on the diverse topics is not superfluous but essential to the completion of the work itself. What remains of the performance are images; the speech act is lost. The performance could not be captured in its durational entirety; no one person could simultaneously hear all the conversations taking place. The conversations were not documented in full and the process the act took place temporally. Thus the performance could be understood as truly engaging in what Arendt understands as a political act: the bringing together of a mass of virtuosos to perform their political conversations in public space, prioritizing the activity over a material outcome to outlast the performance.

Conclusion

Whilst it would be easy to conclude that, based on Arendt's argument, the new social public art practices discussed here have simply adopted the guise of performing arts, this shift is more complex. The implicit political nature of the works discussed

complicates the reading as simply performative (presenting something more akin to 'performative politics') and can further be located in relation to the changing mode of capitalism under neoliberalism. We arrived at Arendt's ideas via Virno, who painted a bleak image of contemporary work as having the appearance of politics through its embracing of the performative. This leads us to the question of how do we distinguish between the two? Between work and politics? How can it be argued that, following Arendt, these contemporary practices are political when immaterial labour has taken the performing artist and put her to work for capital?

The proposed answer to these questions lies with the works' situation in public space and the reliance on the public. In concluding his chapter, Virno proposes a way in which virtuosic labour can be overcome; he calls for the intellect gained through work (communicative skills and knowledge) to be repurposed for action rather than put to use for (capitalist) work. We might, therefore, understand projects like *Tahrir Cinema, Chalk* and *Between the Door and the Street* as political practices that have returned the virtuosic skills now embraced by immaterial labour to the original conception of the performing artist aligned with the politician. The performance takes place in the public street and engages a public not simply as viewers but as inherent to the act itself. This is not the art-going public of the (classed) gallery space but the democratic (antagonistic) public of urban space. The public in these examples are political beings – protestors in Taksim Square, passers by who have something to say and a public engaged in social justice work on gender – in a public site chosen for its political potential and/or histories. The practices discussed forgo the privatized space of work and the individualism fostered by neoliberalism. If the city is to remain as an oeuvre, the social element is imperative to its functioning. Lacy's positioning of the participants in the liminal space between public and private, and the final move into and amongst the public, might serve as a metaphor for moving out of the privatized, classed space of the gallery and returning critical discussions and the production of new knowledge to the public realm.

Knowledge and action are important in both Arendt and Virno's analyses. Like the Ancient Greek philosophers from whom Arendt borrows the figure of the virtuoso, her argument prioritises the act of making over the object itself. For Socrates, the speech act is prioritized over writing (this is how we learn and remember). With no compendium of the conversations that took place on the stoops that October evening, Lacy's performance similarly prioritises the conversations over material evidence. It is important to emphasis that these conversations took place between and are heard and received by the general public, by passers-by seeing the spectacular image of the 400 volunteers dressed in black with yellow pashminas sat on stoops in the street and interested to see what is taking place.

Knowledge production is similarly at the heart of *Tahrir Cinema*. During the protests, protestors - the public - could see events taking place elsewhere in the Square. Unlike *Between the Door and the Street*, after the event, Mosireen created an archive, so that these events may not be forgotten and workshops to pass on their learned skills to enable others to learn how to counter mainstream media narratives. Furthermore, we could read the reaction to the impromptu events during Lima's *Chalk* siting as denouncing unsanctioned knowledge production in public space. When the public artwork engaged a politicised public, it was ceased. In all three examples, the public had a role to play: documenting and providing footage; using the chalk to write on the ground and to participate in and bear witness to the conversations. In 'The Specificity of the City', Lefebvre distinguishes between the city as architectural fact and the urban as a social reality, made up of relations constructed and conceived of thought. (Lefebvre 1968: 103) The production of intellect and new knowledge in the public realm could be step towards a political artistic practice that once more understands and embraces the city as an oeuvre, a city in which the public contributes the political.

References

Allora, Jennifer and Calzadilla, Guillermo (no date) Art 21, http://www.art21.org/images/allora-calzadilla/chalk-lima-1998-2002-0.

Arendt, Hannah (1961/2006), *Between Past and Future*, London: Penguin.

Art 21 (2007) Preview: Allora & Calzadilla in Season 4 of "Art in the Twenty-First Century", http://www.art21.org/videos/preview-allora-calzadilla-in-season-4-of-art-in-the-twenty-first-century-2007. Accessed 1 September 2016.

Benjamin, Walter (1940/1968), 'Theses on the philosophy of history', in Hannah Arendt (ed.), *Illuminations*, New York: Shocken Books, pp. 253–64.

Bishop, Claire (2004) 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', October, 110, pp.51-79.

---(2012) *Artificial Hells*: *Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, London: Verso.

Boltanski, Luc and Chiapello, Eve (2005) *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Verso.

Bourriaud, Nicolas (2002) *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods, Les presses du reel.

Child, Danielle (2011) 'Socialised Labour under Change: Collaboration, Contracted Labour and Collective Modes of Production in Art Since the 1960s', PhD thesis, University of Leeds, unpublished.

--- (forthcoming) *Working Aesthetics: Art, Labour and Capitalism,* London: Radical Aesthetics Radical Art/Bloomsbury.

Doherty, Claire (ed.) (2015), *Out of Time, Out of Place: Public Art (Now)*, London: Art Books.

Filming Revolution (n.d.), 'Tahrir Cinema', http://www.filmingrevolution.org/article/136/tahrir_cinema. Accessed 1 September 2016.

Finkelpearl, Tom (2013) *What we Made: Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation,* Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Jackson, Shannon (2011) *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Kester, Grant (2004) *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Lacy, Suzanne (1995), *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, Seattle: Bay Press.

Lefebvre, Henri (2004) 'The Specificity of the City' (1968) and 'The Right to the City' (1967) in E. Kofman and E.Lebas (eds) *Writings on Cities*, London: Blackwell, pp.100-103 & 147-159.

Thompson, Nato (ed.) (2012), *Living as Form: Socially-engaged Art from 1991–2011*, New York: Creative Time.

Virno, Paolo (2004) *A Grammar of the Multitude*, Los Angeles, New York: Semiotext(e).

[1] Of course, the media representation of this act was a constructed image, cropped to appear as though a crowd had massed to witness the symbolic destruction of Hussein's reign when, in fact, a very small number of people were there to witness the toppling.
[2] New York's East Village in 1980s and Shoreditch in East London are good examples here.
[3] These alternative narratives– of community and public or street art/performances - have recently been revived. Included among those writing about these histories are Claire Bishop (2012), Tom Finkelpearl (2013) and Shannon Jackson (2011).
[4] Public Art Sweden began as a government agency in 1937; however, since 2012 it has moved its focus away from permanent artworks to new forms of public art practice. Although Creative Time was founded in 1973, I include it here as, under Anne Pasternak's directorship and with Nato Thompson's presence, the agency has been a prominent voice in contemporary leading conversations about the socially-engaged art. Situations was founded in 2002.
[5] Of course, Thomas Hirschhorn's 'monuments' break all the rules here. Whilst his monuments often include a sculpture, this is not *the* artwork. Emphasis is placed on the social interaction and events that take place throughout the duration of each monument project.
[6] Notably, the 1990s is the decade in which performative social practices begin to be recognised in the artworld, appearing in both galleries and in artistic discourse.
[7] For some artworks the manufacturing of works is undertaken by others and their labour remains hidden.
[8] On the eve of my first presenting this argument at the *Artists' Critical Interventions into Architecture and Urbanism* conference, University of Warwick, on July 15th 2016, a coup d'etat erupted in Istanbul. President Erdoğan, who was out of the country at the time, took to social media to encourage the Turkish public to amass at Taksim Square, demonstrating the political power ascribed to people gathering in this public space.
[9] A full list of these participants can be found online here: http://creativetime.org/projects/between-the-door-and-the-street/stoop-participants/
[10] Grant Kester (2004) writes about Lacy's work as a form of 'dialogic art'.

Short bio:

Danielle Child is Lecturer in Art History at Manchester School of Art. Central to her research is the quest to return the idea of labour to conversations about art. Recent publications include: 'Dematerialisation, Contracted Labour and Art Fabrication: The Deskilling of the Artist in the Age of Late Capitalism', *Sculpture Journal*, 24:3 (2015) and To Hell with (the Commodification of) Culture!', *Anarchist Studies*, 23:2 (2015). She is currently working on her book *Working Aesthetics: Labour, Art and Capitalism,* forthcoming with Radical Aesthetics Radical Art and Bloomsbury.